

REMARKS

I. INTRODUCTION

In response to the Office Action dated March 31, 2004, claims 21, 37 and 44 have been amended, claims 34, 35, 40, 41, 47 and 48 have been cancelled, and claim 51 has been added. Claims 21-28, 30-33, 36-39, 42-46 and 49-51 remain in the application. Entry of these amendments, and re-consideration of the application, as amended, is requested.

II. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Applicants' attorney has made amendments to the claims and added a new claim as indicated above. These amendments and the new claim were made in accordance with the comments in paragraph (7) of the Office Action and introduce the elements of dependent allowable claims 34, 35, 41, and 48 into their respective base independent claims. Briefly: claim 21 was amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 35 (which was cancelled); claim 34 was cancelled and replaced by new claim 51 (which includes the elements of independent claim 21 and dependent claim 34); claim 37 was amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 41 (which was cancelled); and claim 44 was amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 48 (which was cancelled). Dependent claims 40 and 47 were also cancelled in view of the amendment to their respective base independent claims.

III. PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

In paragraphs (1)-(2) of the Office Action, claims 21-28 and 31-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Cox et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,034,189 (Cox). In paragraphs (3)-(4) of the Office Action, claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cox as applied to claims 21 and 32. In paragraph (5) of the Office Action, claims 21, 36-40, 42-47, 49, and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cox in view of James et al., GB 2 284 809 (James). However, in paragraph (7) of the Office Action, claims 34, 35, 41, and 48 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the base claim and any intervening claims.

As indicated above, Applicants' have amended the claims in accordance with paragraph (7) of the outstanding Office Action. Applicants amendment, without prejudice and without acquiescence to the Examiner's rejections, renders the rejections moot.

IV. CONCLUSION

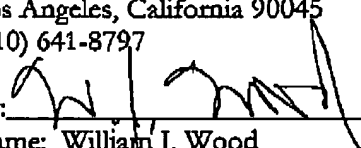
In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is now in good order for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner believe minor matters still remain that can be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is urged to call Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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